

PUBLIC BUILDING—ST. PAUL.

JANUARY 20, 1857.

Mr. E. B. WASHBURNE, from the Committee on Commerce, made the following

**R E P O R T .**

*The Committee on Commerce, to whom was referred a bill making an appropriation by Congress for the purpose of constructing a public building at St. Paul, Minnesota Territory, for a custom-house, post office, &c., submit the following report :*

That they have had the subject under consideration, and report a bill herewith, in accordance with the recommendation of the Secretary of the Treasury, contained in a letter to the Hon. Henry Dodge, chairman of the Committee on Commerce in the Senate, which is made a part of this report.

St. Paul is the present capital of the Territory of Minnesota, and has at the present time a population of some ten thousand souls, and is rapidly increasing. It is the most important point on the Mississippi river, above Galena, and is the centre of a large and increasing business. It is in the Minnesota collection district, and has a collector, and must become the point where large amounts of duties will be collected for the government. The United States courts sit at St. Paul, and a suitable court-room is much needed, there being now no proper place for holding the courts. The post office there is a very important one as an assorting office. It is at that point that immense amounts of mail-matter have to be assorted before being sent to other parts of the Territory.

But the most urgent necessity for a government building at St. Paul at the present time is for the purposes of a public depository. But a small proportion of the public lands of that region have as yet been sold, and the government has now no safe or proper place to deposit the immense amounts of money to be derived from the sales of those lands. There are now in the Territory of Minnesota no less than eight land offices, and the moneys received at those offices would be deposited at St. Paul in the event of a safe depository being erected there, which would be a great annual saving to the government, the distances from the offices being so much nearer St. Paul than to the places where deposits are now made.

A public building will also be likely to be very soon wanted at St. Paul for another purpose. The public interest would seem to require that the surveyor general's office, now located at Dubuque, in the State of Iowa, should be removed to that place; the public lands in Iowa having been all surveyed, while in Minnesota there are immense amounts yet unsurveyed. Should that be done, the government should have accommodations for the office in its own fire-proof building for the preservation of the surveys, plats, &c. The committee, therefore, recommend the passage of the accompanying bill.

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TREASURY DEPARTMENT, *December 20, 1856.*

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 17th instant, transmitting a resolution of the Committee on Commerce, relative to an "appropriation for the construction of a building at the city of St. Paul, in the Territory of Minnesota, for a custom-house, post office, and court-house," and asking for such suggestions upon the subject as I may think proper and conducive to the public interest.

In reply, I have to say that, in consequence of its great importance as a public depository, I should recommend the erection of a fire-proof building of stone, for a public depository, custom-house, post office, court-rooms, and other United States offices, 60 feet by 90 feet, and 56 feet high from the top of the under-pinning to the eaves, having wrought-iron girders, beams, shutters, stairways, roof, &c., for which there would be required an appropriation of one hundred thousand dollars, and ten per cent. additional for contingencies, exclusive of the cost of site.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,  
JAMES GUTHRIE,  
*Secretary of the Treasury.*

Hon. HENRY DODGE,  
*Chairman Committee on Commerce,  
Senate United States.*

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I hereby certify that the foregoing letter is a true copy of the original now on file with the Committee on Commerce.

H. A. HAYDN,  
*Clerk of Committee.*

JANUARY 12, 1857.